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NAVAL POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL
Monterey, California

THESIS

**MILITARY INNOVATION:
SOURCES OF CHANGE FOR UNITED STATES SPECIAL OPERATIONS FORCES (SOF)**

by

Jon F. Giese

December 1999

Thesis Advisor: David Tucker
Second Reader: Susan P. Hocevar

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Today, in the post-Cold War era, each of the U. S. military services and U. S. Special Operations Command (USSOCOM) realizes that in order to remain relevant it must be able to innovate and change. This thesis defines military innovation as a change in the stated roles or missions of the organization to solve current or projected military challenges or threats as defined by the national strategy. The thesis surveys three contending theories of military innovation. It identifies elements from each and develops a hypothesis to explain innovation in U. S. Special Operations Forces (SOF). This hypothesis is then tested against three instances where U. S. SOF accepted and developed the new missions of counterinsurgency, counterterrorism, and counterproliferation. The study concludes that the variables of SOF culture, changes in the security environment, civilian intervention, and military leaders have combined to cause military innovation in U. S. SOF. Of these variables, military leaders, who control of resources and can provide promotion pathways to junior officers, is necessary for innovation. Recommendations for USSOCOM are then drawn from these conclusions.

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MILITARY INNOVATION: SOURCES OF CHANGE FOR UNITED STATES SPECIAL OPERATIONS FORCES (SOF)

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ABSTRACT

Today, in the post-Cold War era, each of the U. S. military services and U. S. Special Operations Command (USSOCOM) realizes that in order to remain relevant it must be able to innovate and change. This thesis defines military innovation as a change in the stated roles or missions of the organization to solve current or projected military challenges or threats as defined by the national strategy. The thesis surveys three contending theories of military innovation. It identifies elements from each and develops a hypothesis to explain innovation in U. S. Special Operations Forces (SOF). This hypothesis is then tested against three instances where U. S. SOF accepted and developed the new missions of counterinsurgency, counterterrorism, and counterproliferation. The study concludes that the variables of SOF culture, changes in the security environment, civilian intervention, and military leaders have combined to cause military innovation in U. S. SOF. Of these variables, military leaders, who control of resources and can provide promotion pathways to junior officers, is necessary for innovation. Recommendations for USSOCOM are then drawn from these conclusions.

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I. INTRODUCTION

> A rapidly changing world deals ruthlessly with organizations that do not change—and USSOCOM is no exception. Guided by a comprehensive, enduring vision and supporting goals, we must constantly reshape ourselves to remain relevant and useful members of the joint team. USSOCOM must embrace and institutionalize the process of change (Gen. Peter J. Schoomaker, *Special Operations Forces: The Way Ahead, p. 6).*

A. BACKGROUND

Accomplishing the above goal may be a difficult task. The United States military is a large bureaucracy and the United States Special Operations Command (USSOCOM) is a part of this bureaucracy. When one thinks of large bureaucracies, one does not usually think of innovation and change. On the contrary, one has Orwellian visions of conformity, rigidity, and standard operating procedures. One definition of bureaucracy is "administration characterized by excessive red tape and routine" (Random House College Dictionary, 1980), and the military bureaucracy with its hierarchical monocratic structure is commonly viewed as the ideal stereotype of such an organization.

While these organizations are not known for innovation, it will be imperative for the U. S. military and USSOCOM to innovate, change, and adapt to meet the security threats of

the future. Today's security environment is characterized not by the relative stability of the bipolar Cold War era, but by the uncertainties of a multipolar one. The military threats, foes, and challenges may be too numerous and difficult, if not impossible, to identify, and history is ripe with instances of militaries failing to grasp the changes in the strategic environment and the nature of warfare.

Bureaucracies, however, do innovate, even military ones, and there are many examples where military bureaucracies have recognized changes and developed an effective strategy to counter new threats. The U. S. military today, including USSOCOM, is going through a period of increased emphasis on innovation and change. A recent Internet search of articles in military periodicals dating back to 1990 resulted in 143 hits with "military innovation" used in the title. Some analysts have speculated that due to the rapid pace of technological development coupled with doctrinal and organizational innovation, the U. S. military will experience not just change, but a revolution in military affairs (RMA). (Fitzsimonds and Van Tol, 1994)

However, the focus of this thesis will not be on whether USSOCOM will innovate but why and how. While there have been studies on the nature of military innovation in

general and in particular with respect to the U. S. military, none have focused solely on special operations forces (SOF). While USSOCOM is a part of the U. S. military, there are aspects that make it separate and unique. This study will identify variables and test a hypothesis that offers an explanation of innovation in special operations forces (SOF). In doing so, one may make judgements about USSOCOM innovation today. Chapter I will define terms and the scope of the study. Chapter II will review several contending theories of military innovation, identify their strengths and weaknesses, and develop a hypothesis to explain U. S. SOF innovation. Chapters III through V will test this hypothesis with three case studies, and chapter VI will provide a summary and recommendations.

B. DEFINING INNOVATION

Before delving into an in-depth study of military innovation, the term "innovation" needs to be defined and differentiated from similar terms associated with military change, such as "The Revolution in Military Affairs" (RMA), "modernization," "technological innovation," and "military planning." The literature is replete with differing definitions of innovation from the broadest to the most narrow. In its broadest sense, innovation is defined as

"something new or different introduced" (Random House College Dictionary, 1980), so that almost any change may be interpreted as an innovation. Defined in a more narrow sense, it is a change in the concepts of operation or the ideas governing the ways in which forces are used in a campaign in one of the primary combat arms of a service or the creation of a new combat arm. (Rosen, p. 7, 1991) Innovation can be distinguished as revolutionary versus evolutionary, as strategic, operational or tactical, or as wartime versus peacetime. Too broad a definition and it loses its usefulness, (any change is an innovation); too narrow a definition and the case studies are too few to draw definitive conclusions.

In view of the above, military innovation for the purposes of this study will be defined as a change in the principal mission(s) of an organization. A military organization's principle mission is its primary or core tasks and affects doctrine, organizational structure, capabilities, and how resources are used. Therefore, indicators of military innovation include, but are not limited to, new doctrine, organizations, and capabilities in which resources (time, money, and personnel) are dedicated. Military innovation involves the development of new warfighting concepts and capabilities that bring about the

performance of new missions or a significant alteration in the way in which existing missions are performed. This definition can be further refined by differentiating it from similar terms dealing with military change.

This will not be a study of the current notion of a Revolution in Military Affairs (RMA). While a RMA does consist of military innovation, military innovation, by itself, does not equal a RMA. A RMA is:

> a fundamental shift in military strategy, doctrine, and tactics that occurs generally, but not always, due to a change in technology. With a RMA comes the need to reconsider all existing military theory and a transition to a new process of warfare (Tritten, 1995, p. 1).

A RMA affects all levels of warfare, strategic, operational, and tactical. The changes in war brought on by the *levee en masse,* which is widely recognized as a RMA, had little to do with the military innovations of Napoleon but had its roots in the ideological, social, cultural, and political changes of the Enlightenment. A RMA is the synergistic effect of multiple military innovations, advances in technology, changes in organizational structure, and alterations in the dimensions of strategy that leads to a great leap forward in how wars are fought.

While military innovation involves less change than a RMA, it is more than military modernization, technological innovation, and planning. Military modernization is about upgrading old equipment to perform old missions. Technological innovation concerns advances in equipment or adapting new technologies to perform old missions, but military innovation, as this study will use the term, is more about new roles and missions than doing old ones better. It is how things are done rather than what they are done with. Military planning involves selecting from among the organization's currently available capabilities and applying these to solve current or projected military challenges. Military innovation, as defined in this thesis, involves the development of new missions to solve current or projected military challenges or threats as defined by the national strategy. Using this definition of military innovation, the scope of this study can be delineated.

C. SCOPE

This thesis will examine three instances of innovation by U. S. Special Operation's Forces from the 1950s to the present. U. S. Special Operations Forces (SOF) will be defined as those active and reserve component forces of the U. S. military services designated by the Secretary of

Defense as SOF and specifically organized, trained, and equipped to conduct and support special operations. While the U. S. military has a rich history of conducting special operations dating back to the American Revolutionary War, it also has a history of taking an ad-hoc approach to special operations mission, misusing SOF in war and disbanding them during times of peace.[1] Not until the formation of 10th Special Forces Group in June 1952 did the U. S. Army have a permanent, standing, formal peacetime unit dedicated to conducting special operations. Therefore, this study will be limited to the period of 1952 to the present.

In identifying instances of innovation during this era, one can examine stated SOF missions for instances in which SOF accepted new core tasks, or missions that caused the development of new war-fighting concepts and capabilities to meet threats defined by the national strategy. Today, USSOCOM lists nine principle special operations missions: Psychological Operations (PSYOP), Direct Action (DA), Unconventional Warfare (UW), Special Reconnaissance (SR),

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[1] For examples of the U. S. ad-hoc approach to special operations see Vandenbroucke, L. S., *Perilous Options: Special Operations as an Instrument of U. S. Foreign Policy*, 1993, and the misuse of U. S. SOF see Arquilla, J., (Ed.), *From Troy to Entebbe: Special Operations in Modern Times*, 1996.

Civil Affairs (CA), Foreign Internal Defense (FID), Combating Terrorism (CBT), Counterproliferation (CP), and Information Operations (IO). (*United States Special Operations Forces Posture Statement*, 1998) The first five missions are more traditional SOF missions and were the original missions of SOF in the early 1950s. The last four are new concepts and missions that developed after this period. FID developed from the counterinsurgency (COIN) mission of the 1960s. CBT developed in the late 1970s and the CP mission grew out of CBT and became a distinct mission in the early 1990s. IO is the newest mission and has only recently been added in the last few years. For the IO mission it may be too early in its doctrinal development to draw conclusions, but the addition of the other missions, COIN, CBT and CP, introduced new war-fighting concepts and capabilities, caused the creation new organizations and involved a significant amount of SOF resources (people, time, and money).

The development of these new missions can be viewed as U. S. SOF innovations. This thesis will be a study of the development of the U. S. SOF missions of COIN, CBT, and CP as examples of U. S. SOF innovations. The goal will be, by an in-depth study of the development of these three missions, to further the understanding of SOF innovation and

provide USSOCOM with conclusions and recommendations for future SOF innovation. Because these conclusions are derived from a limited number of case studies, further research (expanded time period, across different countries) would be required to demonstrate their validity and robustness.

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II. CONTENDING THEORIES ON MILITARY INNOVATION

A. INTRODUCTION

The three theories on military innovation reviewed briefly here offer differing theoretical perspectives about military innovation. Each of the three authors, Posen (1984), Avant (1994), and Rosen (1991) emphasizes or focuses on a different level of analysis: the strategic or environmental level, the unit level, or the individual level, and this difference in the focus of the level of analysis colors what the theorist defines as the primary causes of military innovation. Elements from each of these three differing theories will be used to derive a testable hypothesis to explain U. S. SOF innovation.

1. Posen

In *The Sources of Military Doctrine: France, Britain, and Germany between the World Wars,* Barry Posen examines two theories, organizational theory and balance of power theory, to explain how the formation of military doctrine takes place. Using these two theories, he makes predictions about three aspects of military doctrine, one of which is the degree and character of military innovation. Organizational theory, in which the level of analysis is at the unit or organizational level, predicts that militaries will exhibit

a tendency toward stagnation or lack of innovation while balance of power theory, with the focus at the strategic or environmental level, predicts that militaries may innovate due to the influence of the strategic environment. Of the two theories, Posen determines that balance of power theory has the most explanatory value and greatest utility. (Posen, 1984, pp. 8 and 239) Both of these theories will be covered in turn.

Posen takes a very narrow view of military organizations and organizational theory. He characterizes all military organizations as relatively inflexible bureaucracies. Posen argues that during times of relative international calm or when there is a stable distribution of power, organizational theory explains why militaries are prone to stagnation or lack of innovation. According to his interpretation of organizational theory, military institutions, left to their own devices with little civilian intervention, will tend not to innovate, but will rely on standard operating procedures, programs, and doctrine to coordinate and control large numbers of individuals and sub-organizations. As these procedures, programs, and doctrine become routine and institutionalized, innovation becomes difficult, organizations responsible for programs develop vested interests, and doctrine may hang on long after it has

outlived its usefulness. (Posen, 1984, pp. 44-57) Additionally, during these times of relative peace, military members who advocate change and innovative doctrine will be seen as outsiders or military mavericks. Rarely will they be able to overcome institutional biases to bring about innovation. (Posen, 1984, p. 60) For these reasons, Posen states that organizational theory predicts stagnation. Posen believes that this normal non-innovative state can be overcome by shifts in the strategic environment and uses balance of power theory to explain this process.

According to balance of power theory, when there is a shift in the strategic environment, when threats appear greater and war more probable, or after recent military failures, civilians will be more concerned with the state's military capabilities and pay greater attention to military matters. To the extent that civilians can influence the military, they will either force or offer incentives to the military to overcome institutional biases resistant to change. Given these biases, civilian intervention into military doctrine would seem to be the essential determinant of innovation. (Posen, 1984, p. 57)

Additionally, as the realities of a state's power position in international politics comes to light and when the threats become sufficiently grave, it is possible that

soldiers will be more amenable to outside criticism, likely to examine traditional premises, and be more open to change. During these times, balance of power considerations can overcome organizational biases. (Posen, 1984, p. 240) Shifts in the strategic environment or recent examples where the military has proven unable to operate in this environment causes civilian intervention in military matters along with increased military open-mindedness. This combination leads to military innovation. (Posen, 1984, p. 60) Figure 1 serves to summarize and illustrate this theory. The solid lines indicate that the shift in the environment followed by civilian intervention is necessary to cause military innovation, and the dotted line indicates that the strategic environment may make the military organization more open to civilian influence.

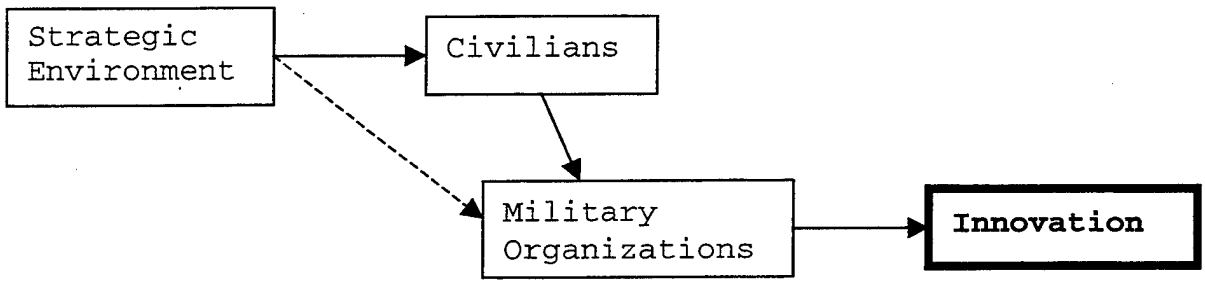

Figure 1. Posen's Theory of Military Innovation

2. Avant

According to Deborah Avant in *Political Institutions and Military Change: Lessons From Peripheral Wars*, domestic institutions or an institutional model holds the key to explaining variations in military doctrine and how readily it will be adapted to meet new circumstances. (Avant, 1994, p. 130) Her level of analysis is at the unit or organizational level. Avant, contrary to Posen, takes a broader view of organizational theory. She argues that organizational theory does predict that some units will innovate, even military ones, without outside influence. Avant states that not all military organizations are the same. Some military organizations are more innovative than others.

Avant compares and contrasts the cases of the U. S. Army in Vietnam and the British Army in the Boer War and Malaya. In both cases, the two countries occupied structurally similar positions in the international system with comparable grand strategies that required them to meet challenges from small powers. Balance of power theory predicts that similar countries in similar positions should generate comparable military responses, but in the above cases, the U. S. Army failed and the British Army succeeded

in innovating and adopting effective counterinsurgency strategies.

Avant argues that this variance is due to the differences in the structure of domestic institutions, the ways civilian leaders monitor, organize, and reward military institutions, and the historical biases these institutions develop due to this interaction. (Avant, 1994) The organizational culture that develops because of this history will favor either adaptability to changes in the strategic environment and civilian influence or resistance and stability. Since the scope of this thesis will only be on U. S. SOF, this summary of Avant's theory will not focus on variations in the structure of domestic institutions from country to country.

While the majority of Avant's argument is focused on differences in U. S. and British political and military systems, she discusses the successful development of counterinsurgency strategy in both the CIA and U. S. Marines in Vietnam. The reason for U. S. Army rigidity and U. S. Marine adaptability lies in each institution's history and organizational culture. The U. S. Army, even with its earlier Revolutionary War experiences in guerilla warfare, has traditionally fought wars based on a strategy of annihilation, a strategy which seeks the overthrow of the

enemy's military power. (Weigley, 1973) When the U. S. Army professionalized after the Civil War, relatively free from civilian influence, it patterned itself after the Prussian-imperial military system, a system geared toward fighting large conventional battles in Europe. This system gained credibility in World Wars I and II, and Korea, and when the U. S. Army was faced with the war in Vietnam, it fought the way it knew how with a conventional mindset aimed at annihilating the enemy's forces even when the civilian leaders and the situation called for a different kind of strategy.

Consequently, contrary to Posen, Avant views "civilian intervention as neither a necessary nor sufficient condition for military responsiveness" (Avant, 1994,p. 5). Rather, innovation occurs when "institutional incentives...encourage military and civilian leaders to see the international demands in the same way" (Avant, 1994, p. 10). In Vietnam, the Army and the civilian leaders did not see the international situation in the same way. The Army still saw its primary role as that of fighting a conventional war, one based on generating combat power with massed formations and firepower and annihilating the Soviet military forces on the battlefield. The institutional incentives favored this type of war. Most of the equipment, command structures, and

doctrine were geared toward Europe. The U. S. Army's history allowed it to develop, promote, and encourage an institutional culture based on fighting particular types of wars. During Vietnam, this culture was unresponsive to the calls of civilian leaders for a new kind of fighting strategy, that of counterinsurgency.

The institutional history and culture of the U. S. Marines is very different. Their position within the U. S. service structure has been historically tenuous. This caused a constant search for a mission that would allow them to maintain their institutional integrity. (Avant, 1994, p. 85) The Marine Corp's mission changed from ships' guards to small landing parties to larger expeditionary forces supporting U. S. foreign policy abroad, but as they became more removed from ships, the Army pressured for their absorption. In order to remain independent, the Marines grasped upon the amphibious assault mission. It filled a void in the their organizational existence. It gave them a focused wartime mission, and once and for all made the Marines distinct from the Army. (Millett, 1996, pp. 71-72)

However, even after this and the successes of World War II, the Marine's role in U. S. national security strategy was still uncertain enough to keep the organization poised for adaptability. (Avant, 1994, p. 86) The traditional

insecurity of the U. S. Marine Corp's mission in the theaters dominated by the other services and the unconventional nature of the missions it did perform led to an institutional culture in which it was always searching for a new mission. The Marines developed a culture that encouraged adaptability and innovation. When civilian leaders called for a response to the security problems of Vietnam, the call for counterinsurgency was taken seriously by the Marines. (Avant, 1994, pp. 86-87)

The Marines' organizational adaptability and Army's inflexibility can be clarified and illustrated by Robert Quinn's (1988) competing values model. This model provides a conceptual framework for thinking about an organization's culture and biases. The competing values model has two axes, a vertical axis ranging from flexibility to stability and a horizontal axes ranging from internal to external focus (Figure 2). An externally focused organization is oriented toward competition, engagement, urgency, or short timelines, while an internally focused organization reflects an orientation toward coordination, equilibrium, or longer timelines. The values of an organization are also classified as favoring spontaneity and flexibility or predictability and order. The two axes provide four quadrants that reflect the culture, information processing

style, and bias of organizations. Quinn states that the model does not suggest that opposite ends of an axis cannot mutually exist in an organization. Rather, the values and bias are opposites in our minds and we tend to view them as mutually exclusive. (Quinn, 1988, pp. 44-50) Applying Quinn's framework to Avant's case of the Marines and Army, she might place the Army in the bottom left quadrant and the Marines in the top right (Figure 2).

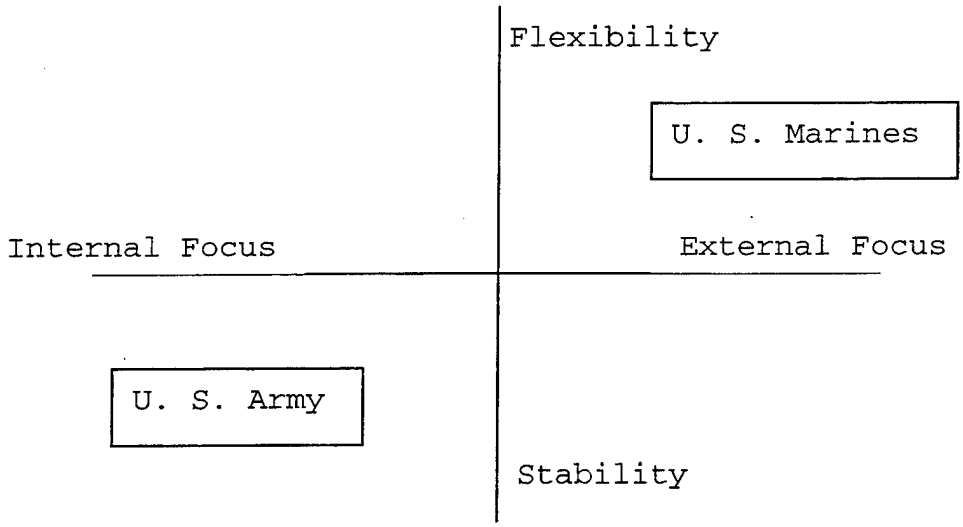

Figure 2. Competing Values Model

In summary, according to Avant, the ability of military individuals and leaders, as well as civilians, to bring about innovation in their organizations is limited by the organization's historical biases and culture. Military individuals and leaders will pay attention to issues that

they have some incentive to work. They expect to be rewarded, and promoted, and are encouraged in areas in which the agency has historical interests. Individuals interested in their careers will pay attention to what the organization has rewarded historically and will innovate if it helps them pursue their career goals. (Avant, 1994, pp.16-17, 97-98) Avant's theory can be illustrated in Figure 3.

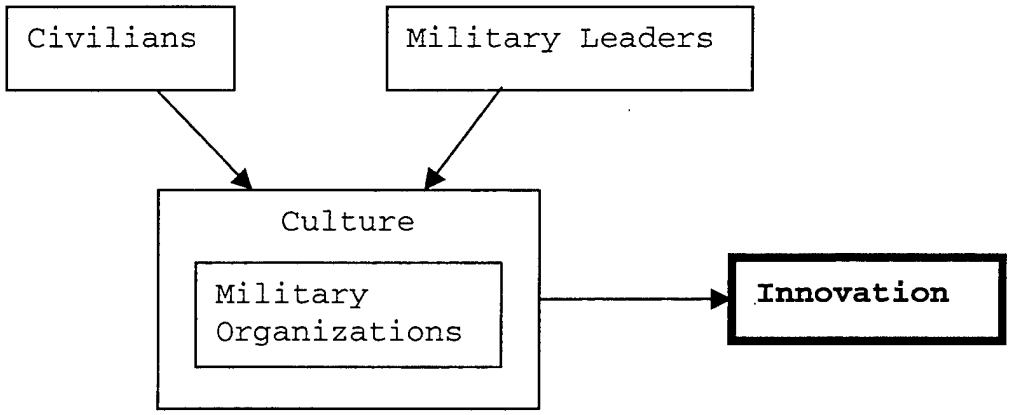

Figure 3. Avant's Theory of Military Innovation

3. Rosen

In *Winning the Next War: Innovation and the Modern Military,* Stephen Rosen analyzes military innovation at the individual level. Consequently, he offers conclusions concerning military innovation different from Avant and Posen.[2] Rosen examines a military leader's ability to bring

[2] Rosen believes military innovation differs in peacetime, wartime, and with regard to technology. The focus here is

about change in the organization. He views military organizations not as large monolithic bureaucracies, but as made up of various branches, services, or sub-units each with its own culture and distinct way of thinking about war. The struggle among these sub-units is not over resources and power as in the classic "bureaucratic politics model" advanced by Graham Allison in *Essence of Decision*, but over the ideas about the way in which war should be conducted. While there is some general agreement among sub-units about the principles of war, how the sub-units should interact, and their roles and missions, there are many differing theories concerning the relative priority of these roles and missions. Even when these priorities are established, arguments about what the next war will and should look like challenge these priorities and generate disagreements about how the sub-units should operate in wartime. (Rosen, 1991, pp. 18-19)

According to Rosen's case studies of military innovation, civilians have had only a limited impact on this system. Rosen states that civilians can and do join in this debate on ideas and have a great deal of say about how

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on Rosen's theory of peacetime military innovation since that is the context in which innovations in U. S. SOF developed.

resources are allocated. However, "civilian political leaders do not appear to have had a major role in deciding which new military capabilities to develop in peacetime and in war" (p. 255), and "in practice, 'outsiders' can seldom exert a direct influence on military reform" (Rosen, 1991, p. 21).

Change in military organizations only comes about from within the system through the actions of military leaders. Civilians and military mavericks do not possess legitimate power because they are outsiders. According to Rosen, military leaders exercise power by control over the promotion of officers, and the intellectual struggle concerning theories of victory is won by senior officers creating new promotion paths for junior officers practicing a new way of war. (Rosen, 1991, pp. 20-21)

> In short, military innovation occurs when respected senior officers with traditional credentials formulate a strategy for innovation, and create a promotion pathway for junior officers learning and practicing the new way of war. Civilian intervention is only effective to the extent that it can support or protect these officers (Rosen, 1991, p.251).

For Rosen, the primary causal factors for innovation are a strategic change and the response by senior military leaders to this change. Rosen's theory is summarized in Figure 4.

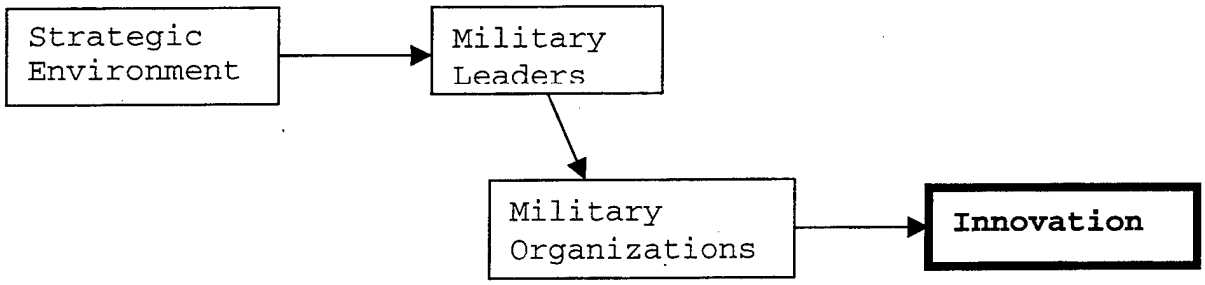

Figure 4. Rosen's Theory of Military Innovation

The elements of all three contending theories can be summarized in Table I below.

	Historical Biases and Culture	Strategic Environment	Civilian Intervention	Senior Military Leaders
Posen	Not Addressed	Required	Required	Necessary Not Sufficient
Avant	Required	Not Addressed	Not Required	Required
Rosen	Not Addressed	Required	Not Required	Required

Table I. Summary of Theoretical Elements

B. HYPOTHESES

An examination of Table I reveals that while there is significant overlap in the theories, they do not do so completely. Each theory leaves something out and comes to different conclusions on what is required to bring about military innovation. Posen and Rosen leave out culture and Avant leaves out the strategic environment. By a review of the case studies, this thesis will illustrate that a combination of the factors identified by all the theories is necessary to explain SOF innovation.

1. SOF Historical Bias and Culture

U. S. Special Operations Forces' have an organizational culture that favors adaptability and flexibility. The early history of U. S. SOF is similar to that of the U. S. Marines in many respects. Like the Marines, the SOF position in the defense establishment has been tenuous and has led to a continuous search for new missions. The three services, the Army, the Navy, and the Air Force have secure, geographically well-defined missions. Generally, the Army's mission is to fight the nation's land battles, the Navy's to control the seas, and the Air Force's to control the air. Traditionally, SOF has had to justify its existence by finding a niche and searching for new missions. This continuous search is a part of U. S. SOF history and

culture. An organizational culture that favors flexibility is an underlying influence in each of the three case studies, a common variable, a given, or constant. Therefore, it will not be specifically addressed in each case but understood to be present in all.

2. Strategic Environment

Militaries develop new capabilities and missions in response to some actual or perceived threat. There must be a need or requirement for the new mission. Changes in the international role of the United States or shifts in the strategic security environment create this need. For example, the emergence of the United States as a global naval power, particularly in the Pacific, created the potential for naval wars in which the U. S. Navy would have to operate far from home bases. This created the military requirement to establish advanced operating bases for fleets to receive repairs and resupply. Hence the need for an amphibious force that could establish these bases, the U. S. Marines. (Rosen, 1991, pp. 57-67; Millett, 1996, pp. 50-95) Using this same reasoning, there must be a strategic need or requirement for U. S. SOF to create a new mission.

3. Civilian Intervention and Influence

Civilians are vital to bringing about military and SOF innovation for the following reasons. They determine the

national security strategy, policy on the use of military force, and provide political support and resources for military innovations. In the United States, the civilian leadership assesses the strategic security environment and formulates, with input from military leaders, the national security strategy. Recognized changes in the strategic environment that threaten U. S. security may bring about changes in the security strategy and a call for new military/SOF missions. Civilians determine the policy on the use of SOF to meet the threats identified in this strategy and provide the resources (people, equipment, facilities, and money) to enable SOF to carry out these missions. They also define how these resources will be allocated. As defined above, a military innovation is a new mission that supports the national security strategy as defined by civilians. The policy on the use of SOF is determined by civilians, and in order for SOF to develop a new mission, it needs resources supplied by civilians. Therefore, civilians are necessary for SOF innovation.

4. Senior SOF Leadership

Civilians alone do not determine the national security strategy, policy on the use of military force, and the allocation of resources. Military leaders influence strategy, provide advice on policy, and have some control on

how resources are allocated and spent. Civilians, because they are outside the military, will not be able to bring about SOF military innovation. Historically, it has required a senior officer or group of officers who perceive a need and new role for SOF. They must be able to work within the system and be in a position to influence significant resources (people, time, and money) to develop the innovation. While time and money are important resources to develop the new mission, the vital resource is people. To ensure the organization maintains some history, experience, and advocates of the innovation, the leader(s) must be able to provide recognition, reward, and promotion opportunities for junior officers committed to the new mission.

Innovation in SOF requires a combination of the factors: a shift in the strategic environment, the support of civilians, and responsive SOF leadership. To test this hypothesis, the three case studies will be examined for these elements.

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III. COUNTERINSURGENCY (COIN)

> Foreign Internal Defense (FID) - Organize, train, advise, and assist host nation military and paramilitary forces to enable these forces to free and protect their society from subversion, lawlessness, and insurgency (*U. S. SOF Posture Statement*, 1998, p. 3).

A. INTRODUCTION

An insurgency is primarily a protracted political struggle. One of the tools available to insurgents is violence, terrorism, and the use of guerrilla operations to undermine the stability of the existing government. Even if these tools of the insurgent are brought under control, the political and subversive struggle will go on, and the insurgents can still win. The political, social, and economic issues that are the root causes of an armed insurgency must be addressed. The military approach must be balanced and target the subversive tools of the insurgent as well as the root causes.

According to Russell Weigley's *The American Way of War,* American military strategists have favored the offensive strategy in which the goal is the annihilation of the enemy and the destruction of the opposition's fielded forces with massive firepower. They have paid little attention to political and social consequences until after the fighting

has subsided. (Weigley, 1973) The pre-Vietnam U. S. military's experience in counterinsurgency was trivial compared to the services' experience in conventional wars where this strategy of annihilation was reinforced. In the 1960's when the strategic environment and the civilian leadership called for a new kind of strategy, an effective counterinsurgency one, the U. S. military failed to innovate and U. S. SOF was unable to develop the counterinsurgency mission because it ran counter to the doctrine of the conventional U. S. military.

The focus of this case study will be on the period from the late 1950s to the early 1960s since this was the period of the development of counterinsurgency doctrine. Additionally, only Army and Air Force SOF counterinsurgency capabilities will be addressed because Navy counterinsurgency capabilities were primarily developed within the U. S. Marines.

B. STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENT

The development of U. S. counterinsurgency doctrine was driven by a conflux of several trends and factors in the international environment after World War II. Among the trends and events was an epidemic outbreak of insurgencies in the developing world, the development and expansion of

the Cold War, and the appearance of a successful insurgent strategy.

The post-World War II period saw a reawakening of nationalism and revolution in the former European colonial empires. Europe was severely weakened by the war, and the loyalties that the European imperial powers had fostered disintegrated under the impact of revolutionary nationalism. The 15 years immediately following World War II saw a second wave of de-colonialization and a proliferation of states (the first wave occurred immediately after World War I). During this period the number of independent states nearly doubled, growing from 54 to 107. (Papp, 1997, p. 41) Since many new Third World states were artificial creations of colonialism, these national governments had questionable legitimacy.

> Most Third World governments exercised only limited or ineffective control over parts of their nations. Because of rugged terrain, poor infrastructure, government inefficiency, and tradition, the common pattern was for the influence of the regime to decline according to distance from the capital (Metz, 1995, p. 2).

During this same 15-year period, one study done at the Center for Research in Social Systems counted 29 ongoing insurgencies. (*Challenge and Response in Internal Conflict,* 1968)

U. S. defense policy, shortly after World War II and for the next 45 years, remained centered on a single overriding objective, Soviet containment. U. S. counterinsurgency strategy developed within this context. In 1947, to counteract the Communist revolution in Greece and relieve the Soviet pressure on Turkey, President Truman broke with the long-standing, traditional U. S. foreign policy of non-entanglement in European politics. He proclaimed a more active policy that became known as the Truman Doctrine: a belief "that it must be the policy of the United States to support free peoples who are resisting attempted subjugation by armed minorities or by outside pressures" (Truman, 1947). Communism was compared to a "malignant parasite" that had to be contained by all possible measures. While the policy of communist containment went through several different forms, (massive retaliation, flexible response, and roll back), it became the basis and ideological foundation for U. S. national and military strategy for the next 45 years.

By 1949, the European lines were drawn and with the Chinese Communist victory in China, communism seemed to be spreading beyond the borders of Europe. Mao offered proof to potential insurgents that apparently strong Western-

backed regimes could be defeated, but more importantly, he offered a methodology or blueprint to accomplish this.

> Of the insurgent strategies that appeared during the Cold War, Maoist "people's war" was undoubtedly the most successful. With the exception of Cuba, nearly all victorious insurgents--Vietnam, Cambodia, Angola, Zimbabwe, Mozambique, Guinea Bissau, Namibia, Algeria--followed the variant of Maoist people's war. (Metz, 1995, p. 5)

In the 1950s, the Eisenhower administration's response to Communist expansion had been a national security strategy based on massive nuclear retaliation, but this had proven ineffective in preventing developments in Indochina and the Soviet suppression of Hungary. In 1960, under the Kennedy administration, the national security strategy changed to one of flexible response; the U. S. needed the capability to respond to counter communist action at any level on the spectrum of conflict. Flexible response assumed a global threat existed in the form of a strategy adopted by the unified Communist apparatus to advance its cause by exploiting the strains of modernization throughout the Third World. The U. S. had a duty and the power to respond. The Communist strategy was people's war and to thwart this required a multifaceted political, economic, and military approach. (Blaufarb, 1977, p. 66-67)

C. CIVILIAN INTERVENTION

Civilians played a significant role in the development of counterinsurgency doctrine. President Kennedy took a special interest in and campaigned to develop counterinsurgency capabilities immediately after he took office. *National Security Action Memorandum (NSAM) No. 2,* released in the first few months of the Kennedy administration, called for an increase in counter-guerrilla defense resources and was but the first of several actions prodding the national security system into responding. (Blaufarb, 1977, Krepinevich, 1986) Other NSAMs on the subject quickly followed: NSAM-124 defined the approach and high priority given to counterinsurgency, NSAM-182, basic doctrine and procedures, NSAM-131, training of civilian and military agencies, NSAM-119, military civic action. (Blaufarb, 1977) Kennedy made public appeals, urged response in his first State of the Union message, called special meetings on the subject with the Joint Chiefs of Staff, spoke personally to high-ranking commanders, while his staffers made speeches at bases and published articles articulating that policy in journals. (Blaufarb, 1977; Krepinevich, 1986)

Additionally, numerous studies were initiated and committees established to determine the nature of the U. S.

response. The highest level committee established was the Special Group (Counterinsurgency) which provided for interdepartmental coordination of policy, a structure to accomplish tasks and included some of the highest members of the State and Defense departments, the Director of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), the Special Assistant to the president for National Security Affairs (NSA), the Administrator for the U. S. Agency for International Development (USAID), the Director of the U. S. Information Agency, and the Attorney General, Robert Kennedy. (Blaufarb, 1977) The civilian government was committed to developing a "new kind of strategy," and it attempted to use all its means to pressure the military to develop a counterinsurgency doctrine that was balanced (i. e. considered political, social and military factors) to support this strategy. (Blaufarb, 1977, p. 65)

D. DEVELOPMENT OF SOF COIN DOCTRINE

There has been much written about the failure of the U. S. military to innovate and respond to President Kennedy's call for a new kind of strategy. While the reasons given are many, most would agree that the U. S. military failed to significantly alter conventional doctrine, strategy, or force structure to meet the President's call.

U. S. military doctrine focused on offensive operations and Special Operations Forces were unable to fully develop doctrine that ran counter to this. Initially, U. S. Special Operations Forces did innovate when operating outside of their parent services' control. During early counterinsurgency operations, U. S. SOF was under the operational control of the CIA. The CIA provided the resources and allowed SOF the flexibility to develop doctrine, strategy, and forces compatible with the U. S. National Security Strategy. However, as the war in Vietnam expanded and received more attention, conventional military involvement increased. Control of SOF passed back to the conventional military and any early successes were undermined or counteracted as the parent services exerted greater control over their wayward SOF children.

1. Army COIN

After World War II, the Army focused only on those aspects of special warfare that were most closely linked to larger conventional efforts. The 1952 establishment of the 10th Special Forces Group at Fort Bragg gave the Army its first peacetime unit dedicated to special operations. Its mission was to organize, equip, train, and direct actions against Soviet forces in Europe in case of war. (Adams, 1998) These forces were "to conduct guerrilla warfare in

support of conventional operations," and "allow the theater commander to conduct offensive operations deep in enemy territory" (Cable, 1986, p. 145). In the first Army doctrine statements "there arose a tendency to view guerilla war as an exclusively conventional form of warfare, ignoring its political and social context, and seeing it as only important insofar as it supported and enhanced the conventional combat capacity of regular armed forces" (Adams, 1998, p. 60).

Special Forces began training indigenous forces in Southeast Asia in 1956, and this training focused on raids and offensive operations. (Adams, 1998, pp. 58-66) Due to this early experience in training forces in guerrilla warfare, President Kennedy latched onto Special Forces as his instrument of choice for combating guerrilla forces. With the advent of this high-level of interest, the Army Special Forces were given the counterinsurgency mission. (Adams, 1998, p.73)

Although the counterinsurgency mission was added to Special Forces' doctrine, it was not fully developed. It was a new experience put into practice and adjusted empirically with "many tactics attempted on a lets try and see what happens basis. If something worked, then it became an acceptable counterinsurgency tactic; if not, it was

dropped" (Kelly, 1973, p. 10). Under the CIA, Special Forces had control of its resources (people, time, money) and had the latitude and flexibility to develop counterinsurgency doctrine as it saw fit, but as the Army exerted greater control over Special Forces' resources, they lost their independence and any innovation was stifled.

Special Forces operations in Laos from April 1961 through October 1962, known as WHITE STAR, were supported by money and materials from the CIA. Initially, command and control was exercised through a Programs and Evaluations Office (PEO), manned by retired or reserve status officers, and tasked to monitor how U. S. resources were being used. They allowed the Special Forces maximum flexibility and control in the training of Laotian tribal groups. As the program expanded in 1961, a Military Assistance and Advisory Group (MAAG) was established and the Special Forces came under a regular Army advisory command structure. (Stanton, 1985)

Even with the new command structure "the ability of Special Forces to interact directly with other agencies, such as the CIA and DIA allowed them to avoid regular MAAG channels" (Stanton, 1985, p. 31). WHITE STAR was initially left on its own and training focused on creating an effective, indigenous counter-guerrilla force.

Unfortunately, U. S. government civilian policymakers considered this force too independent of the Laotian government, and just as it was to move against the Ho Chi Minh trail, MAAG pulled in the reins in June of 1962. The whole program was abandoned by the fall. (Stanton, 1985, pp. 16-30) This same sequence of events, initial independence followed by the U. S. Army exerting control, would be repeated in Vietnam.

The development of Special Forces' counterinsurgency doctrine showed some signs of promise in its first operations in Vietnam. Special Forces were initially deployed to Vietnam in 1961 and were assigned to support the Civilian Irregular Defense Group (CIDG) under the direction of the CIA's Combined Studies Group, which operated a staff section of MAAG Vietnam. (Stanton, 1985) In these operations, they made an attempt to aim at the social-political center of gravity of counterinsurgency. "The methods employed by the Special Forces were straight out of classical counterinsurgency doctrine" (Krepinevich, 1986, p. 70). While they did develop forces for local offensive operations, the approach was balanced. The focus was on developing village defense forces, civil affairs programs, work with USAID, and Psyops. (Adams, 1998, p. 85; Krepinevich, 1986, pp. 70-71; Kelly, 1973, p. 19-44)

As in Laos, initially the Special Forces operated under the direction, logistic support, and funding provided by the CIA, and were given great latitude in designing and running the programs. (Kelly, 1973; Stanton, 1985) The U. S. mission in Saigon (the CIA) employed a flexible and militarily unorthodox system to supply the CIDG camps, and Special Forces detachment efforts were primed with readily available CIA funding. The operations were considered a success, and the CIA subsequently requested more Special Forces soldiers in order to expand the program.

The Army leadership was less impressed. "Many senior officers viewed the independent Special Forces effort with extreme displeasure" (Stanton, 1985, p. 39). They disliked its lack of offensive operations, and had misgivings over the use of Special Forces by the CIA. (Blaufarb, 1977; Krepinevich, 1986; Stanton, 1985) With expansion of the program, the Army argued for and gradually received control. With the phase-out on 1 July 1963 of the CIA's logistic responsibility for the CIDG program, all control passed to the U. S. Military Assistance Command, Vietnam (MACV). From that time on, the U. S. Army assumed complete responsibility for Special Forces activities in Vietnam.

Once control of Special Forces in Vietnam passed to the regular Army, the offensive bias of the forces increased.

"There was a shift in emphasis from expanding village defense systems to a primary use of camps as bases for offensive strike operations" (Kelly, 1973, p. 34). The Army began organizing the CIDG as a more conventional force. For example, they established a standardized table of organization and equipment for a CIDG light guerrilla company in an attempt to "standardize" indigenous forces. (Kelly, 1973, pp. 47-48) Operational control of Special Forces detachments was transferred to MACV senior advisors. These officers had little experience in counterinsurgency and were more apt to use the forces in support of conventional and joint operations with the Vietnamese Army.

With the assumption of the South Vietnamese border surveillance and control mission in 1963, the Special Forces responsibilities additionally shifted away from pacification and population security operations to missions viewed by the military hierarchy as more appropriate and reflective of the conventional Army doctrine. (Kelly, 1973, pp. 46-48; Krepinevich, 1986, pp. 73-75) "In such operations, CIDG forces were used as regular troops in activities for which they had not been intended, and in many cases, for which they had not been trained or equipped" (Kelly, 1973, p. 49). The Army sought to leave pacification exercises to the local forces and move the Green Berets into offensive search and

destroy missions. (Avant, 1994; Krepinevich, 1986, pp. 69-73) "Once the Special Forces were under MACV (Army) control, it was difficult for them to retain their flexibility" (Avant, 1994, p. 62). Loss of organizational independence undermined their commitment to the idea of a counterinsurgency doctrine.

While Special Forces had an advocate outside the military in President Kennedy, it lacked one inside the military powerful enough to be able to control the resources to bring about permanent change. The vision the Army had of how Special Forces should be used in counterinsurgencies was different from that of some military leaders at the time. At the top of the joint service pyramid was Marine Major General Victor Krulak in the newly established position in June of 1961 of Special Assistant to the Director of the Joint Staff for Counterinsurgency and Special Activities (SACSA). While Krulak had significant influence in the Marines, he had little influence in Army and Air Force matters. (Avant, 1994) In the same month, Kennedy appointed Brigadier General Rosson to a newly created position of special assistant for special warfare to the Army Chief of Staff. The Army saw the appointment and position as an intrusion by the administration into military matters. General Rosson was not even permitted by the Army to develop

his own staff. (Avant, 1994, p. 58; Krepinevich, 1986, p. 43) Colonel William Yarborough, the commander of the Army's Special Warfare Center (SWC), was eventually promoted to Major General in order to represent Special Forces at the inter-service level, but this did little to help with the Army's acceptance of Special Forces. (Adams, 1998, p. 69) In Vietnam, the first Special Forces commander at MACV staff was Col. George C. Morton, an officer with Special Forces experience in Greece, but he was to be the exception. "Of the ten Special Forces commanders in Vietnam, only three had extensive prior experience with Special Forces" (Adams, 1998, p. 148).

While Special Forces did receive increased funding and equipment, the one, most important, resource it never was able to control was personnel. In order for an innovation to be accepted, the organization must provide incentives for personnel to develop the non-traditional mission. These personnel must be provided with the same promotion opportunities, rewards, recognition, and incentives to ensure the organization maintains some experience in and advocates for the new mission.

At the time, Army Special Forces was a military specialty not a branch or arm of the service. In a branch or arm of the service, the U. S. Army commissions, assigns,

and develops officers involved in a particular military specialty. It provides career management and promotion opportunities for officers in that particular specialty. Examples of traditional U. S. Army branches include infantry, artillery, and armor. Prior to 1987, officers that volunteered and qualified for Special Forces came from these traditional branches, and even while the officer was assigned to a Special Forces unit, these branches guided the officer's career. Therefore, there was no SOF career path, only a conventional military one. The conventional military recognized, rewarded, and promoted officers based on its traditional bias towards offensive operations. The new counterinsurgency mission did not fit this mold. Two different Army studies concluded that officers perceived that those involved in traditional operations were promoted over those involved in non-traditional counterinsurgency operations and that continued assignments in Special Forces could be detrimental to a career. (Avant, 1994, p.65; Krepinevich, 1986, pp. 207-210) While a few dedicated souls did step outside the mainstream and make a career, there were few incentives to do so.

2. Air Force COIN

After World War II, the Air Force, like the Army, focused only on aspects of special warfare that were most

closely linked to unconventional operations supporting larger conventional efforts. Of the seven post-World War II wings which had an unconventional warfare role, only three were able to survive budget cuts in the early 1950s and little or no attention was paid to the development of an air power doctrine for use in small wars. (Dean, 1986, p. 86-87) The Air Force's main concern during the 1950s was in a traditional mission, the development of a strategic bomber force.

Under Kennedy's prodding for a counterinsurgency capability, the Air Force responded with the establishment of the 4400th Combat Crew Training Squadron in 1961 at Eglin Air Force Base, Florida. One of the first taskings was to send a detachment to South Vietnam, under the code name "Farm Gate." The original mission was training friendly foreign air forces in strike, reconnaissance, and airlift operations under austere conditions. The focus was on training and support of indigenous forces. In contrast, traditional Air Force service doctrine focused on offensive air operations, finding and annihilating the enemy's fielded forces or destroying his means of support. These are the activities the Air force rewarded. In South Vietnam as the conflict expanded, there quickly developed a conflict between the official role of flying training missions and

that of flying traditional Air Force combat strike missions. (Dean, 1986, pp. 88-89; Chinnery, 1994, pp. 86-70) By 1962, Farm Gate was conducting training and strike missions, even though combat missions were not authorized until 1965. (Dean, 1986) This conflict between training and combat was to continue and hampered the development of Air Force counterinsurgency doctrine for the next several years.

In the spring of 1962, President Kennedy directed the Secretary of Defense to "expand rapidly and substantially the orientation of existing forces for sublimited and unconventional wars" (Dean, 1986, p. 89). As a response to this additional political pressure, the Air Force established the Special Air Warfare Center (SAWC) which absorbed the 4400th in 1962. The primary mission of SAWC initially was to train air forces of friendly foreign nations in all aspects of unconventional warfare and counterinsurgency air operations. No mention of creating a capability to conduct air strikes was made in SAWC's first regulations governing roles and missions. Psychological operations, such as leaflet drops and flights with loudspeaker equipped aircraft, and civic actions such as providing medical and dental care and improving native infrastructure were an integral part of early operations in Latin America, Asia, and Africa. (Dean, 1986, pp. 89-93)

Aircraft were simple, rugged, and suited to primitive, unconventional situations. Personnel were trained in skills not required elsewhere in the Air Force but those thought useful when operating in the underdeveloped world. (Blaufarb, 1977, pp. 76-77; Chinnery, 1994, Dean, 1986) In its original inception, the SAWC conducted operations worldwide, outside the bounds of usual Air Force operations, and had considerable control over its own affairs.

As the Vietnam War expanded, conventional Air Force assets under the command of Pacific Air Forces (PACAF) began to play a greater role. On 1 July 1963, Farm Gate was reassigned to PACAF for operational and administrative command. This relegated SAWC to providing aircraft and crews. (Dean, 1986, p. 94) As the mission, demands, and conventional Air Force involvement in Vietnam grew, the conventional Air Force's ways of thinking about war, doctrine, goals, and actions that it rewarded took priority. The emphasis of the SAWC mission changed.

By 1965, new Tactical Air Command (TAC) regulations authorized combat strike operations in Vietnam. Providing training, advice, and assistance to indigenous forces gradually received a lower priority. (Dean, 1986, p. 95-97) As U. S. involvement in Southeast Asia intensified, special air operations in Vietnam ceased to be special. The only

distinction between special air warfare and conventional air force assets became the age of the aircraft assigned to each. Strike capabilities mattered more and training, assistance, and civic action less. While early development of doctrine provided promise, because of the demands of Vietnam and conventional Air Force control, "the Special Air Warfare Center never had the time to adequately develop and prove an air doctrine that operated outside the bounds of normal, conventional air tactics" (Dean, 1986, pp. 100-101).

E. SUMMARY

There was an outbreak of insurgencies after World War II that was potentially disruptive to U. S. interests. Those insurgencies based on class conflict and led by Communist parties appeared to pose a significant threat to the overall balance of power between East and West. The national security strategy recognized this threat and called for the development of a congruent military doctrine suited to countering this threat. The civilian policy focused on all aspects of the counterinsurgency problem, political, economic, and military, and this policy was articulated to the armed forces. While there was substantial civilian influence, intervention, and pressure, and a shift in the security environment, the case above demonstrates that the

Army and Air Force, failed to develop new doctrine to counter the threat.

With prodding, the services did devote or create SOF, and allow them to conduct counterinsurgency missions, but as these relatively new forces became involved in Vietnam there developed a conflict between what was required for the mission and current conventional military doctrine. Organizational incentives rewarded and favored offensive military operations, and because SOF was unable to operate outside this system and lacked leaders with the power to change these incentives, SOF doctrine also reflected this offensive bias.

SOF showed great flexibility at least initially when not under direct conventional military supervision and developed strategies that were congruent with U. S. policy (e. g. the CIDG program and early AF missions in Latin America). As the U. S. conventional military became more embroiled in Vietnam, SOFs' doctrine shifted to a more offensive nature, one that was historically consistent with long-held conventional military beliefs about waging war. Because of the institutional arrangements, lack of long-term incentives (promotion paths), or powerful leaders within the system, these units lacked the ability to counter this shift or develop doctrine contrary to that of their parent

service. Today, with the creation of U. S. Special Operations Command, the institutional arrangements are much different. U. S. SOF has control over its resources and is able to provide promotion opportunities for junior officers involved in counterinsurgency missions.

IV. COMBATING TERRORISM (CBT)

> Combating Terrorism (CBT) - preclude, preempt, and resolve terrorist actions throughout the entire spectrum, including antiterrorism (defensive measures taken to reduce vulnerability to terrorist acts) and counterterrorism (offensive measures taken to prevent, deter, and respond to terrorism), and resolve terrorist incidents when directed by the National Command Authorities or the appropriate unified commander or requested by the Services or other government agencies (U. S. SOF Posture Statement, 1998, p. 3).

A. INTRODUCTION

After Vietnam, the Services again concentrated their attention on nuclear and conventional warfare and de-emphasized the role and capabilities of SOF. SOF survived the lean times by embracing the more conventional and accepted roles of providing support for the regular armed forces, but changes in the strategic security environment and a recognition of this by military leaders created a push to develop new doctrine and capabilities. In this instance, military leaders with a new vision were in a position to bring about change, able to influence resources, and overcome institutional resistance. Civilian intervention did not enter the picture until after SOF had already established new units and doctrine to fight the war on terrorism.

B. STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENT

While terrorism is nothing new in world history, the modern wave of terrorism can be traced in large measure to two events in the late 1960s: the defeat of the Arab armies in the Six Day War and the rise of the Provisional Wing of the Irish Republican Army (IRA). The first event convinced the stateless Palestinians that they could not tie their future to the defeat of a Western backed Israel by conventional means and the second event led to the outbreak of a protracted struggle within Great Britain's borders. (Livingstone, 1982) These two groups' adoption of terrorism as the means to bring about political ends ushered in an era from the late 1960s to the early 1980s that saw a dramatic increase in international terrorist incidents. (Secretary of Defense, *Annual Report to Congress, Fiscal Year 1986,* 1985, p. 23) The growth of media coverage graphically illustrated to other groups the impact terrorism could have, and the vulnerability of the West. Disgruntled political groups, as well as other nations, saw terrorism as a cheap way to achieve political objectives.

During this time, the USSR, operating in tandem with its Eastern bloc neighbors and various proxy nations, extended its influence over revolutionary terrorist movements by supporting, sustaining, and abetting

international terrorism as a relatively low-cost strategy to chip away on the edges of the Western alliance. While accusations of Soviet sponsorship of terrorist organizations were much debated at the time, the collapse of the Soviet Union has proven an Eastern European connection. Released documents proved that they provided training, equipment, and safe havens and participated in an implicit 'terror network' consisting of governments and terrorist groups linked by compatible ends and willing to use or support violence as a means to achieve them. (Tucker, 1997, pp. 25-26; Naftali, 1999)

With desperate political groups willing to resort to violence and a worldwide support network, terrorist incidents became almost commonplace. However, a few select incidents rose above common occurrence and had a dramatic impact on political agendas and the development of SOF counterterrorism doctrine. The effects of these events will be examined in the paragraphs below.

C. CIVILIAN INTERVENTION

On September 5, 1972, at the Munich Olympic Games, Palestinian terrorists took nine members of the Israeli athletic team hostage. The shootout, broadcast live on television, ended with all hostages, five terrorists, and

one policeman killed. The day after the incident, the Nixon administration established an intelligence committee that would work with other nations to deter international terrorism and called for two committees to study the problem and make recommendations on possible courses of action. (Clemer, 1987; Tucker, 1997) Acting on recommendations of the study, a cabinet committee, The Cabinet Committee to Combat Terrorism, and a working group were established, but these bodies did little to advance U. S. capabilities to combat terrorism. The Cabinet Committee met once and that meeting was attended by only eight of the ten members. The working group proved too large (100 members) and inefficient to accomplish anything significant. (Clemer, 1987, p. 17-19)

The election of President Carter triggered a major review and subsequent reorganization of the antiterrorist bureaucracy in September of 1977, but again this had little real effect. (Tucker, 1997, p. 20) On October 19, 1977, West German Commandos known as GSG 9 stormed a hijacked Lufthansa 737 in Mogadishu, Somalia, rescued all eighty-six passengers, killed three terrorist, and captured a fourth. The action prompted President Carter to send a memo to the Secretary of Defense and the National Security Advisor to find out how other countries had developed such effective counterterrorist forces and to encourage the U. S. military

to "develop similar U. S. capabilities" (Martin and Walcott, 1988, p. 39). World events did create interest in counterterrorism by civilians. However, this interest was not strong enough and these civilians were not in the position to bring about a change in policy.

> Until the Iran hostage crisis, there was not enough cabinet-level interest in terrorism in the Carter administration to provide strong central level guidance to counterterrorism efforts or a motive for all levels to cooperate. The highest-ranking members of the Carter administration did not consider combating terrorism a high priority (Tucker, 1997, p. 21).

The storming and seizure of the U. S. Embassy in Iran in 1979 brought terrorism to the forefront of U. S. concerns, and the subsequent failed hostage rescue attempted by U. S. SOF contributed to the loss of confidence in the Carter administration and election defeat in 1980. The Iranian hostage rescue was the defining event in the history of modern U. S. Special Operations. (Adams, 1998) While the U. S. Army had developed a force dedicated to counterterrorism, the 1st Special Forces Operational Detachment Delta (Delta),[3] which participated in the attempted rescue, this force did not have the airlift

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[3] The U. S. military does not officially confirm or deny the existence of Delta. All sources used are unclassified as noted.

support or the command and control structure to carry out the counterterrorist mission. The Special Operations Review Group or Halloway Commission created to appraise what went wrong and provide recommendations brought increased civilian interest and intervention in SOF and started their gradual revitalization by the mid-1980s. (Marquis, 1997)

The failed Iranian hostage rescue also assured terrorism a high level of interest in the Reagan administration. (Clemer, 1987; Tucker, 1997) However, besides an increase in rhetoric denouncing international terrorism, the Reagan administration initially instituted little structural or procedural changes in the U. S. antiterrorism organization. The first counterterrorist exercise with high-level involvement included Vice President Bush, Attorney General Edwin Meese, and Secretary of State Al Haig. The participants reached conclusions about what happened, what should have happened, and what needed to happen, but "issues kept waffling back and forth without anybody willing to make any concrete decision on what they were going to do" (Partin, 1988). The lack of interagency coordination became painfully obvious during the Dozier kidnapping in 1982. (Tucker, 1997) This incident brought another structural and procedural shake-up and led to a standing interagency group, but it would take additional

loss of life to bring about a complete policy shift and a willingness to combat terrorism aggressively with military means.

From the early 1970s until 1984, the U. S. response to terrorism had been an approach based on a passive and reactive defense, but in the aftermath of two Beirut bombings, the destruction of the U. S. embassy in April and the Marines' barracks in October of 1983, President Reagan signed National Security Decision Directive 138 (NSDD 138) in April of 1984. This was the first U. S. pro-active policy, advocating preemption and retribution to combat terrorism. Washington took the posture that it would consider military action in advance of actual incidents to prevent them from occurring or to punish terrorists in the aftermath of an attack. (Clemer, 1987)

Secretary of State George Schultz became the new aggressive policy's spokesman. Schultz had been very much a part of the decision to introduce the U. S. Marines into Lebanon and felt some responsibility to see that the terrorists did not go unpunished. While he became frustrated in his inability to get the government machine moving, the bombing cemented his resolve to keep counterterrorism a high priority. (Livingstone and Arnold, 1986, p.p. 110-111) In a series of speeches and statements,

Schultz touched off a high-level debate within the administration on the political, moral, legal and practical issues surrounding the new policy. This high level interest brought about a gradual change in the bureaucracy and led to the new policy becoming a reality. (Livingstone and Arnold, 1986; Tucker, 1997)

While the military made some improvements in SOF capabilities after Desert One, creating a counterterrorist joint task force and the Special Operations Advisory Panel, the reforms were not enough for some. Among those not happy were Noel Koch, Principal Deputy Assistant of Defense for International Security Affairs, and his deputy, Lynn Rylander. These Department of Defense (DOD) staffers became "the executive branch's connection that enabled Congress to insert itself into nearly every aspect of American Special Operations policy during the 1980s" (Marquis, 1997, p. 80). After a series of House Armed Services Committee hearings in 1983, on the decline of special operations capabilities, Congress began to take a more active and overt role in SOF revitalization. This revitalization ensured that U. S. SOF were able to develop the joint capabilities, command and control structure, and support needed to carry out the counterterrorist mission. SOF funding and personnel increased three-fold between 1981 and 1985. (Adams, 1998)

Congressional pressure led to the establishment of the 1st Special Operations Command (SOCOM) within the Army on October 1, 1982. This new organization was "charged with the responsibility of developing means to respond to various threats" (Adams, 1998, p. 185). In April 1983, the Joint Special Operations Command (JSOC) was established with the "specific responsibility for low-intensity conflict, with special emphasis on terrorism" (pp. 186-187), and in October the Joint Special Operations Agency was established at the national command level, "responsible for the coordination of multi-service special operations doctrine and training" (p. 188). While neither of these organizations had command and control of forces, they could coordinate and ensure that military doctrine was congruent with national policy.

Even with these changes, the Long Commission, investigating the Marine Barracks bombing in Beirut, concluded that the military was inadequately prepared to deal with the threat of state sponsored terrorism. In the end, it would take congressional legislation to overcome the conventional military community's resistance to SOF reform. Ironically, because of this strong resistance and disregard for earlier laws, Congress, for the first time, mandated in 1986 that the President create a unified combatant command, United States Special Operations Command.

With the increased defense budget, rebuilding of SOF capabilities, changes in command and control, and the high-level of interest, the 1985 U. S. response to the *Achille Lauro* hijacking marked a turning point. "While the outcome was not what the participants intended, several of them cited this operation as a benchmark indicating both how counterterrorism capabilities had progressed and how effectively they could be combined" (Tucker, 1997, p. 37)

D. DEVELOPMENT OF SOF CBT DOCTRINE

The 1970s saw SOF take a large part of the blame for the failures of U. S. troops in Vietnam. The U. S. was disillusioned with military intervention in messy internal conflicts. In the post-Vietnam draw down SOF received a disproportionate reduction in force structure and funding compared with the rest of the military. (Adams, 1998; Marquis, 1997) A few senior officers recognized the need for the unique capabilities of SOF, and it was due to their efforts, mainly Lt. Gen. Edward C. "Shy" Meyer, Maj. Gen. Robert Kingston, and Col. Charlie Beckwith that U. S. SOF was able to develop the counterterrorism mission.

Prior to the activation of 1st Special Forces Operational Detachment Delta (Delta) in 1977, the U. S.

Army's most likely force to handle a counterterrorist operation was the U. S. Army Ranger battalions. Reformed in 1974, they had engaged in mock training exercises to free U. S. diplomats, passengers from airliners and to retake nuclear installations and oil refineries that had been captured by terrorists. (Livingstone, 1982) The commander of the 1st Ranger battalion in the mid-1970s remarked that the Israeli Entebbe rescue was just what the Rangers were trained to do. (Celmer, 1987, p. 67) However, the Ranger's training and doctrine emphasized traditional military skills more suited to combat than anything specifically geared to counterterrorist operations. In order to combat terrorism a highly trained unit with special skills is needed, and Delta was the first unit to train and focus on these skills.

Since 1962, Beckwith had been pushing for a different type of U. S. Army unit, one patterned after the British Special Air Service (SAS), but he had received little support within the SOF community. Not until 1976 did his proposals fall on the sympathetic ears of Generals with similar ideas. (Beckwith, 1983)

It was Gen. Meyer whom Beckwith termed "the father of the Delta concept" (Beckwith, 1983, p. 139). Before Carter's memo questioning the U. S. military's counterterrorist capabilities, Meyer independently

determined that the requirement existed and managed to orchestrate the plan to make it happen. Gen. Meyer realized that while the Army was focusing on the Soviet conventional threat in Europe there was a void in U. S. capabilities at the low end of the spectrum. During the 1973 Arab-Israeli war, Meyer, as Deputy Chief of Staff for the U. S. Army in Europe directed shipments of military hardware to Israel. He realized the shipments and the Army's command and control were prime targets for terrorism. Subsequently, as Assistant Deputy Chief of Staff of Operations and Plans in 1976, Meyer enlisted the support of Kingston, then commander of the JFK Special Forces Center, and Beckwith to convince the Army of a need for a counterterrorist unit within SOF. (Partin, 1988; Martin and Walcott, 1988) By May of 1977, Kingston and Beckwith managed to build support and work the proposal for the new unit through the Army's Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) and Forces Command (FORSCOM). According to Beckwith, the support of these two commands was vital since they controlled the resources. Without TRADOC support, the need and requirements could not be justified and without FORSCOM support, the manpower and resources would not have been available. (Beckwith, 1983)

Meyer realized that support for new ideas could not be generated by orders from the top. The need and requirement

had to be created and sold from the bottom-up. (Partin, 1988) At the time, "TRADOC wasn't interested in unconventional forces, in special operations, and in counterterrorism" (Partin, 1988, pp. 3-4). Opponents of the new unit argued that it duplicated capabilities of other established units, mainly the Rangers. Kingston and Beckwith were able to point out that neither the Rangers nor any other military unit had the unique capabilities, or skills that were required in terrorist situations. (Beckwith, 1983) Kingston and Beckwith won the battle of ideas at the lower levels, in the special operations community, at TRADOC and at FORSCOM. Meyer made sure that it received support from the top, from the Chief of Staff of the Army.

In June of 1977, four months before President Carter's memo, Meyer, now with the support of the commanders of TRADOC and FORSCOM, managed to convince Chief of Staff of the Army (CSA) Gen. Bernard Rogers of the need for a counterterrorist capability. Rogers gave his verbal approval, but it would take until September before the necessary paperwork was approved and work could begin standing up the unit.

With CSA support, Delta received a high-priority unit status to ensure resources would be made available without

the usual Army bureaucracy and red tape. Meyer kept the chain of command simple and direct, from a small cell in his office through him as the Assistant Deputy Chief of Staff of Operations and Plans to the Chief of Staff of the Army. The small cell expedited requirements for people, equipment, and dollars. Meyer stated that "we never would have gotten it done if we had to wait for the system to provide resources" (Partin, 1988, p. 4). Each layer of bureaucracy adds additional priorities and takes a chunk out of funding, but with direct control of money, Delta remained autonomous. (Beckwith, 1983, p. 113) This high level of support ensured Delta could find the manpower billets and had access to personnel records in its search for new recruits. A system was set up that limited access to personnel records of people in the unit, but made sure that Delta's people would not be overlooked for promotion. (Beckwith, 1983, p. 121) When Carter sent his memo asking about Army counterterrorism capabilities in October of 1977, Delta was not stood up, but the concept was already in development. Even with all this support, resource problems arose that could have killed Delta, and they required Meyer to intervene directly.

Under a 1976-counterterrorism contingency plan, Readiness Command (REDCOM) was responsible for testing and transportation of counterterrorists units throughout the

world. The plan called for the JFK Center to provide forces to REDCOM to combat terrorist incidents abroad, but Beckwith's new unit would not be ready and operational for another two years. As an interim measure Gen. Mackmull, commander of the JFK Center, authorized the creation of 'Blue Light' within the 5th Special Forces Group as a terrorist reaction unit in case REDCOM called.

The establishment of Blue Light and the activation of Delta triggered an intense intra-service and intra-unit power struggle. Instead of accepting its role as a short-term solution, Blue Light, backed by some officers in Special Forces began to compete with Delta. They challenged and blocked the development of Delta, particularly in the recruitment of volunteer candidates, but also with competition for technical assistance, equipment, and other assets. It took action from Gen. Meyer to put an end to the fight for resources by backing Delta and ordering Blue Light disbanded. (Beckwith, 1983, pp. 119-142)

E. SUMMARY

Delta represented a considerable rethinking by U. S. SOF of the concept of special commando style military units in trying to meet the unique demands of urban warfare and the threat posed by contemporary terrorism. Earlier efforts

by civilian policymakers interested in applying military force to combat terrorism were unsuccessful because they were unable to win the political battles. It took events in the international environment to generate enough high level interest to change policy. While the history of the creation of Delta is punctuated with the actions of terrorists, followed by civilian interest, the unit would not have become a reality if it had not been for the actions of military leaders who recognized the need and were dedicated to the cause. It took military leaders, Meyer, Kingston, and Beckwith, with an understanding of the security environment, the ability to sell the Army on the new concept, and the control of resources to make Delta a reality. In order to be able to develop the joint capabilities for the counterterrorism mission, civilians provided the support to revitalize U. S. SOF in the mid-1980s.

V. COUNTERPOLIFERATION (CP)

> Counterproliferation (CP) - The activities of the Department of Defense across the full range of U. S. government efforts to combat proliferation of nuclear, biological, and chemical weapons, including the application of military power to protect U. S. Forces and interests; intelligence collection and analysis; and support of diplomacy, arms control, and export controls. Accomplishment of these activities may require coordination with other U. S. government agencies (*U. S. SOF Posture Statement*, 1998, p. 3).

A. INTRODUCTION

Nonproliferation can be defined broadly as the prevention of the spread of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) or nuclear, biological, or chemical (NBC) weapons. According to Lawrence Scheinman, assistant director for nonproliferation and regional arms control at the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency (ACDA), historically, nonproliferation activities have been the purview of the State Department or the ACDA; While DOD "was almost entirely involved in strategic issues and the U. S.--Soviet arena. Non proliferation was really like a flea on an elephant's back" (Taubes, 1995, p. 8). This limited role for the Department of Defense and SOF changed in 1993 with the introduction of the Counterproliferation Initiative (CPI) by then Secretary of Defense Les Aspin.

Counterproliferation deals with the realization that nonproliferation will not be 100 percent effective. Counterproliferation refers to efforts to thwart the development of, prevent the use of, and function militarily in response to WMD. The Department of Defense is the lead agency in counterproliferation activities. In 1995, counterproliferation became a new principle mission for U. S. SOF. The creation and institutionalization of this new mission was motivated by a change in the strategic environment, spurred and supported with the necessary resources by civilians, and brought forth and operationalized by SOF leadership.

B. STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENT

There has long been a weapons of mass destruction (WMD) proliferation problem. A memorandum on nuclear weapons by Secretary of War Henry Stimson to President Harry Truman in 1945 stated:

> The future may see a time when such a weapon may be constructed in secret and used suddenly and effectively with devastating power by a willful nation or group against an unsuspecting nation or group of much greater size and material power. With its aid, even a very powerful unsuspecting nation might be conquered within a very few days by a very much smaller one (Falkenrath, Newman and Thayer, 1998, p. 261).

In March 1963, President Kennedy predicted that as many as twenty-five states would have nuclear weapons by the 1970s. (Lavoy, 1991) However, these gloomy predictions of an endlessly spiraling nuclear arms race and fears of a mass proliferation of WMD did not pan out. Before 1993, U. S. had little experience in counterproliferation activities and all efforts focused primarily on traditional nonproliferation activities.

During the Cold war, the main nuclear threat to the U. S. emanated from the Soviet Union, and a vast complex was erected to deter, and defend against Soviet strategic nuclear capabilities. Before the fall of the Soviet Eastern Block, the Soviet Union and the U. S. were, arguably, the principle world powers with conflicting global strategies and goals. During this era, the development, maintenance, and acquisition of nuclear weapons were largely controlled by the two superpowers, albeit with some "leakage" of knowledge and technology to other nations. Nuclear weapons are presently found in the arsenals of only nine states: The seven declared nuclear powers - the U. S., Russia, Great Britain, France, China, India and Pakistan - and Israel and North Korea are both believed to "probably possess" nuclear weapons but maintain an official ambiguity on the subject.

(Schneider, 1999, pp. 1-5; Falkenrath, Newman, and Thayer, 1998, pp. 14-15)

Compared to nuclear weapons there is a wider proliferation of biological and chemical weapons, but despite fewer technical obstacles to their acquisition, actual use of biological weapons has been exceedingly rare and chemical weapons limited. (Falkenrath, Newman and Thayer, 1998) States have powerful incentives against initiating biological and chemical weapons use against similarly armed adversaries. The risks of retaliation in kind, hostile world opinion, domestic political costs, and moral issues have served as brakes on their wide employment. Since World War I, only a few states have used these weapons despite these risks, most often against adversaries that were unable to retaliate in kind. (Falkenrath, Newman and Thayer, 1998)

As with nuclear weapons to prevent biological and chemical weapons spread and use, the U. S. has primarily used nonproliferation tools, deterrence, and diplomacy. The U. S. officially ended its offensive biological weapons program in 1969, and these weapons were formally banned by 140 nations at the 1972 Biological Weapons Convention. This agreement is unverified, and the U. S. currently suspects 10 signatories of possessing offensive biological weapons

programs. Most major states with chemical weapons stockpiles have pledged to destroy them under the Chemical Weapons Convention, but several states boycotted the convention or joined but are still suspected of harboring clandestine chemical warfare programs. The U. S. is presently in the process of incinerating its chemical weapons stockpiles, and Russia has made a pledge to destroy its stockpile, but financial difficulties have delayed this program. (Schneider, 1999; Falkenrath, Newman and Thayer, 1998)

Prior to the March 1995 subway attack by the Japanese cult Aum Shinrikyo in which sarin nerve gas was use to kill 12 and injury more than 5,000, no non-state actor had emerged with the will and technical capability to acquire and use WMD. (Falkenrath, Newman and Thayer, 1998) While countless non-state actors have been caught in possession of lethal chemicals, dangerous biological agents, or radioactive materials, and have made threats, virtually all have lacked the ability to turn these materials into mass casualty weapons. (Falkenrath, Newman and Thayer, 1998, pp.31-44) A May 1974 extortion threat by "Captain Midnight" to detonate a nuclear device in Boston, an incident that turned out to be a hoax but was deemed credible, led to the creation of the U. S. Nuclear Emergency Search Team (NEST)

in 1975. In the years since, NEST has deployed to possible nuclear-terrorism sites approximately thirty times between 1975 and 1993. (Falkenrath, Newman and Thayer, 1998, p. 42) Before 1993, with the exception of NEST, no unit was created or specifically tasked to deal with counterproliferation.

Before the 1991 Gulf War, the U. S. and specifically the Department of Defense had little experience or intellectual history in counterproliferation. During the Second World War, in addition to its task of producing nuclear weapons, the Manhattan Project had, "the task of monitoring and if possible denying German nuclear weapons activities" (Groves, 1962, p. 73). To these ends, the heavy water facility at Vemork, Norway was sabotaged and eventually bombed in 1943, and a facility for the manufacture of uranium components at Oranienburg, near Berlin, was targeted and bombed on 15 March 1945. In April, U. S. forces seized a uranium stockpile in the town of Stassfurt, a town caught between the advancing U. S. and Soviet armies and diverted into the French zone several days ahead of the advancing French Army to round up German scientists, seize equipment, and dismantle laboratories in the Hechingen-Bisengen area. (Groves, 1962, pp. 185-249; Schneider, 1999, pp. 148-150) During the Cuban Missile Crisis, President Kennedy's Executive Committee of the

National Security Council considered conventional airstikes against the Soviet ballistic missile sites in Cuba. Partially, because the U. S. Air Force predicted it would need some 500 aircraft sorties to accomplish the mission and still could not guarantee that all missiles would be destroyed, the naval quarantine became the option of choice. (Garthoff, 1989, pp. 49-50) These limited incidents illustrate that counterproliferation has traditionally not been a major U. S. DOD mission. The 1992 *National Military Strategy of the United States* did not mention WMD under the heading "The Threat" and mentioned only the deterrence of an adversary's WMD with U. S. nuclear weapons. (Joint Chiefs of Staff, 1992, pp. 3-4, 6-7, 13)

One event fundamentally changed the nature of the WMD threat and led to a change in U. S. policy and DOD attitude, the U. S. experience during Desert Storm. The destruction of Iraq's WMD was one of the essential objectives of the 1991 Persian Gulf War. General Schwarzkopf issued a mission statement containing five items including "As early as possible, destroy Iraq's ballistic missile, NBC capability," and six principal missions were listed in U. S. Central Command Operations Order 91-001 including "Destroy known nuclear, biological, and chemical (NBC) production, storage, and delivery capabilities" (Chandler, 1996, pp. 11-15).

General Schwarzkopf told his Army commanders that he considered Iraq's nuclear and chemical capability as one of the country's three centers of gravity, the others being the Republican Guard and Saddam Hussein. (Gordon and Trainor, 1995, p. 157)

The Iraqi WMD capabilities were targeted from the start of hostilities. However, prior to Iraq's invasion of Kuwait in August of 1990, the full extent of the Iraqi WMD program was not well known. Post-Desert Storm inspections revealed how seriously the U. S. intelligence community had underestimated the threat. The Defense Intelligence Agency listed only eleven NBC targets in June of 1990 and this list grew to thirty-four by the end of the war in 1991. (Chandler, 1996) In all, 970 air strikes pounded the Iraqis NBC facilities with the bulk of the attacks against what was considered the most likely threat, chemical weapons. (Department of the Air Force, *Gulf War Air Power Survey: Summary Report,* 1993, p. 80) After the war, United Nations (UN) inspections put the number of nuclear facilities at fifty six, listed six major sites as associated with Iraq's biological warfare program but monitored seventy nine sites as having "suspected" involvement with the program, and detailed twenty-one primary chemical weapons sites with an additional thirty suspected chemical storage bunkers.

(Chandler, 1996) By the Air Force's own admission, the forty-three day air war, conducted under near optimal conditions (good weather, featureless terrain, and a lack of a serious counter air threat), merely "inconvenienced" the Iraqi WMD efforts. (Department of the Air Force, *Gulf War Air Power Survey: Operations and Effects and Effects and Effectiveness*, 1993, p. 329)

The stunning series of post-Gulf War revelations about the size and scope of Iraq's WMD programs and the possibilities of what may have been nearly averted provided lessons to Washington and the rest of the world. Having witnessed the U. S.-led coalition's destruction of the powerful Iraqi military, potential adversaries may seek WMD as a strategic equalizer. General K. Sandurji, former chief of staff of the Indian Army remarked "the lesson of Desert Storm is don't mess with the United States without nuclear weapons" (Chandler, 1996, p. 149). The Iraqi case illustrated to U. S. planners that proliferation is all but impossible to prevent and that nonproliferation efforts have had little effect on a determined proliferator. Iraq's secret nuclear program violated its obligations as a member of the Non-Proliferation Treaty. Rogue states or what one author terms NASTIs (NBC-Arming Sponsors of Terrorism and Intervention) in search of regional hegemony, overtly

hostile to the U. S. or its allies, and possible state sponsors of international terrorism, are pursuing a NBC weapons capability. These states provide the U. S. with a new dimension in the security arena with which to contend. (Schneider, 1999) Anthony Lake, former National Security advisor to President Clinton, identified six "outlaw" or "backlash" states: Iraq, Iran, North Korea, Libya, Syria and Cuba that could be pursuing a WMD program. (Lake, 1994) The Gulf War illustrated that the strategic environment had changed.

C. DEVELOPMENT OF SOF CP DOCTRINE

Desert Shield/Desert Storm was the largest SOF deployment to a single region in history. (Adams, 1998, p. 232) Initially, Special Operations Command Central (SOCCENT) was tasked only to provide combat search and rescue (CSAR) capabilities to pick up downed aircrew behind Iraqi lines, but by the end of the conflict, U. S. SOF had been tasked to perform a wide range of missions, some traditional—psychological operations (PSYOPS), civil affairs (CA), direct action (DA), strategic reconnaissance (SR), unconventional warfare (UC), and CSAR--but others new. (*United States Special Operations Command, 10th Anniversary History*, 1997) These new missions led to the development of

new USSOCOM-defined SOF principal missions and collateral activities. One of these was counterproliferation.

Although U. S. intelligence was not aware of the extent of the Iraqi WMD program, U. S. planners were aware of the potential dangers and, as illustrated above, made a concerted effort to target Iraqi WMD capabilities. General Schwarzkopf questioned U. S. and U. S. SOF capabilities to counter Iraqi WMD. He doubted they could get intelligence as to the extent and location of WMD facilities, could target and strike these facilities prior to any offensive operations, and that these pre-emptive strikes would work. (Schneider, 1999, p. 88-91; Rose, 1999) The inability of the U. S. military and U. S. SOF to provide these capabilities was one of the lessons learned after the Gulf War. (Chandler, 1996; Rose, 1999; Schneider, 1999) As a response to these identified shortcomings, President Bush directed the DOD "to develop new capabilities against proliferants, including capabilities for preemptive action" (Wilson, 1994).

President Bush had recognized the problem, and created momentum and a high interest, and the Clinton administration continued the effort. *The Washington Post,* reported in November of 1992, that then President-elect Clinton stated "the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction would be

one of his biggest challenges" and that he "wanted to lay this marker down for the rest of the world" (Balz and Pianin, 1992, p. 1). In March of 1993, newly appointed Secretary of Defense Les Aspin initiated a comprehensive review of the nation's defense strategy and force structure, the Bottom-Up Review (BUR). The BUR highlighted four major threats to the U. S.; the highest priority was the danger poised by nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction. (Les Aspin, 1993) Secretary Aspin stated that while nonproliferation efforts, "primarily diplomatic measures to prevent the spread of weapons of mass destruction to additional countries," would continue, "DOD must focus on counterproliferation efforts to deter, prevent, or defend against the use of WMD if our nonproliferation efforts fail" (Les Aspin, 1993, p. 6).

Less than two months later Secretary Aspin unveiled the Defense Departments Counterproliferation Initiative (CPI) in an address to the National Academy of Sciences. At the core of the CPI, according to Aspin, is "a drive to develop new military capabilities" to deal with the consequences of proliferation. Aspin listed five main components of the initiative: the first, the creation of the new military mission, counterproliferation. (Les Aspin, 1994, p. 30) A former DOD staffer later remarked concerning the new

initiative, "The whole point behind this exercise is to get the government, and the services especially, mobilized to take the threat seriously, by giving it a new name and giving it new money" (Taubes, 1995, p. 8).

Les Aspin's announcement was met with a mixture of approval, concern, confusion, and derision from the various departments of the U. S. government. Most large organizational changes meet some resistance, and the CPI was no exception. The arms control community and the State Department viewed it as an abandonment of the traditional nonproliferation tools and a challenge to their preeminent role in dealing with things relating to proliferation. The Department of Energy saw it as a potential godsend to reverse their shrinking post-Cold War budget and the military services initially reacted skeptically. To the military it appeared to be a potential drain on strained budgets and another initiative imposed from above with little forethought and military involvement, like the Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI). (Chandler, 1996, pp. 167-169; Schneider, 1999, pp. 48-51; Taubes, 1995; Williams, 1996) In a July 1994 interview, Dr. Ashton Carter, the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Nuclear Security and Counterproliferation, a position created to reflect the importance of the new mission, remarked that DOD civilians

would dictate to the services how much would be spent on the CPI and if the services "do not hear the music, then we will have to do it ourselves" (Carter, 1994, p. 40).

From 1986 to 1990, U. S. SOF had been developing the capability to detect, identify, neutralize, and transport WMD. Several exercises, some with other agencies of the U. S. government, were conducted and had illustrated shortfalls in equipment, doctrine, and training. (Downing, 1999) However, the counterproliferation mission was viewed primarily as an extension of the principal missions of counterterrorism (CT) or direct action (DA), only the "hostage," the device to be seized, or target to be destroyed, was more deadly. After Desert Storm, the exercises continued, and a few individuals within the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense Special Operations/Low Intensity Conflict (ASD SO/LIC), notably Alberto Coll, head of the Policy division, pushed for SOF to play an even greater role in counterproliferation. He viewed counterproliferation as an opportunity for SOF. (Rose, 1999)

In a series of role-playing wargames involving WMD scenarios with members of the NCA staff, ASD SO/LIC, and elements of USSOCOM, it was again highlighted that there existed a need for increased SOF capabilities. As a result, a study was initiated to examine the dimensions of the

threat and how SOF could be employed to meet it. Using the study, Coll, and his staff, delivered briefings, attended meetings, and wrote papers illustrating that a requirement existed. While some support may have been generated within the Joint Staff and SOCOM, those who supported the initiative were not in any position to make large changes. (Rose, 1999, Tucker, 1999) In approximately a year-and-a-half, SOF capabilities to deal with CP had not dramatically increased. Counterproliferation was still seen only as an adjunct to the SOF principal missions for which training-time and resources are primarily expended. In training for those, SOF was viewed as being prepared to accomplish the CP mission. The 1993 *United States Special Operations Forces Posture Statement* lists counterproliferation as one of six SOF collateral activities (*United States Special Operations Forces Posture Statement, 1993,* p. 7), one of seven ways in which SOF supports the National Security Strategy (p. 13), and as one of the collateral activities that could take on an even greater importance in the decade ahead. (p. 32-34) SOF collateral activities compared to SOF principal missions do not receive priority for funding, training, or personnel.

On 20 May 1993, General Wayne Downing became the new Commander in Chief (CINC) USSOCOM, and while the previous commander had viewed counterproliferation as an expanding

SOF collateral activity, General Downing, as CINC from 1993 to 1996, seized on counterproliferation as an opportunity to increase the role U. S. SOF. According to General Downing, "counterproliferation was a mission we (SOF) sought and got from then SECDEF Perry. Formal recognition by DOD would allow us to get resources (money, priority on strategic airlift, training, etc.)" (Downing, 1999). Working with Ashton Carter, the Assistant Secretary of Defense for NBC Programs, Dr. Harold Smith, and personnel within ASD SO/LIC, SOF began to actively lobby for the mission. (Downing, 1999)

Some civilians resisted the greater role for SOF remarking that "They can get you into trouble but can't get you out." (Tucker, 1999) The other services and unified commands had not yet figured out their role in CP or which service or command was going to take primary responsibility for CP development. Even with this indecision, they did not want SOF to take this role. (Downing, 1999) In General Downing's February 1995 statements before the Congressional Committee on Armed Services, he was the only one of the nine unified commanders in chief (CINCs) that addressed counterproliferation. General Downing stated that special operations would play a significant role in the complex mission of counterproliferation, and that it would require continuous detailed planning and coordination from the NSC.

(Downing, undated, pp. 33-34)[4] By fostering interagency contacts, using office calls and visits, and conducting exercises specifically to illustrate SOF capabilities, Downing gradually built support and sold the idea. (Downing, 1999) On 5 May 95, Secretary of Defense (SECDEF) William Perry formally tasked Commander, USSOCOM, to "assume responsibility for organizing, training, equipping, and otherwise preparing U. S. Special Operations Forces to conduct operations in support of U. S. government counterproliferation objectives" (*SECDEF Memorandum for the Commander in Chief, U. S. Special Operation Command, Subject: Special Operations Activities*, 1995).

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[4] Also see: Admiral H. G. Chiles, Jr., CINC, USSTRATCOM, before the Senate Armed Services Committee, 23 February 1995; General Joseph W. Ashy, CINC, NORAD, and CINC, US Space COM, before the Senate Armed Services Committee, 23 February 1995; Admiral Richard C. Macke, CINC, PACOM, before the Senate Armed Services Posture Hearing, 16 February 1995; General John J. Sheehan, CINC, USACOM, before the Committee on Armed Services, United States Senate, 14 February 1995; General Barry R. McCaffrey, CINC, US Southern Command, before the Senate Armed Services Committee, 16 February 1995;General J. H. Bionford Peay. III, CINC, US CENTCOM, before the House National Security Committee, 23 February 1995; General George A. Joulwan, CINC, US EUCOM, before the House Appropriations Committee, National Security Subcommittee, 16 February 1995; and General Robert L. Rutherford, CINC, US TRANSCOM, before the Senate Armed Services Committee. Several CINCs did discuss theater ballistic missile defense and support for nonproliferation, but General Downing was the only CINC to use the term "counterproliferation."

General Downing upgraded counterproliferation from a SOF collateral activity to a SOF principal mission. He made the development of the new mission a priority for USSOCOM, and made this clear in USSOCOM's mission statement. *The U. S. SOF Posture Statement* for 1996 lists counterproliferation first among the nine SOF principle missions. (*United States SOF Posture Statement*, 1996, p. 31) Downing assigned the responsibility for the development of the SOF counterproliferation mission to one of USSOCOM's component commands and ensured they had the people and money to accomplish the task. This command studied requirements and techniques, planned and conducted exercises, and developed joint tactics and doctrine. (Downing, 1999) From 1995 on, almost all-major SOF exercises, at least one per quarter, involved WMD.[5] Downing monitored the progress through his staff and relied on the component commander to keep him informed. (Downing, 1999)

SOF counterproliferation doctrine was gradually developed from exercise experience, testing, after action reports, and lessons learned. Working with Harold Smith, USSOCOM was allocated approximately $1 billion for CP related equipment and training. Downing's successors,

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[5] From author's personnel experience as part of the 16th Special Operations Wing from 1993-1998.

Generals H. Hugh Shelton and Peter J. Schoomaker, have continued to place CP at the top of the command's priority lists and gave considerable support and attention to the task. It can be speculated that because of the priority given to the CP mission within USSOCOM; promotion pathways were created. However, it is too early to draw these conclusions, and that data was not available at the time of the writing of this thesis.

Most of the initial resistance to the CPI in DOD and the other departments of the government were due to how the initiative was introduced, without the prior advisement of the State Department, the ACDA or the DOD as to their roles in the new initiative. (Williams, 1996) DOD as a whole has since taken steps to plan and train for counterproliferation related contingencies. The 1996 and 1997 reports from the Office of the Secretary of Defense noted that "DOD has made substantial progress toward fully integrating the counterproliferation mission into its military planning, acquisition, intelligence, and international cooperation activities. (Office of the Secretary of Defense, 1996; Office of the Secretary of Defense, 1997) DOD's investment in areas related to counterproliferation totaled just under $4.3 billion for fiscal year 1997 (Counterproliferation Program Review Committee, 1996, p. ES-2), with $59.2 million

of that earmarked specifically for support for SOF and another $21.4 million to defend against paramilitary, covert delivery, and terrorist WMD threats (p.25).

D. SUMMARY

Today, as the DOD's counterproliferation mission continues to evolve, it is clear that SOF plays a major role in our national strategy for counterproliferation. This role developed first out of the needs, requirements, and lessons illustrated by the Gulf War. Second, civilians recognized the threat, created the requirement, ensured policy was initiated to address it, and provided the resources. Third, the a series of commanders at USSOCOM discerned that there was an increased role for SOF, lobbied civilian and military leaders for this role, made counterproliferation a priority, and staffed and provided the resources to develop the mission.

VI. CONCLUSION

A. FINDINGS

The three case studies illustrate that not one of theories introduced in chapter II can adequately explain innovation in U. S. Special Operations Forces (SOF). A combination of the variables, culture, a shift in the strategic environment, civilian intervention, and military leadership, aided in the development of military innovation. From the three cases, six conclusions concerning the variables and the nature military innovation in U. S. SOF can be drawn.

First, in all three cases SOF culture aided in the development of the innovation. By using Robert Quinn's competing values model, which was introduced in chapter II, as a framework, U. S. SOF culture could be classified as flexible and externally focused. In the case of counterinsurgency and counterproliferation, U. S. SOF was responsive to civilian intervention and developed new missions. In the case of counterterrorism, while civilian policy had not yet called for the use of military force, U. S. SOF was responsive to changes in the security environment. These examples add credibility to Avant's theory that because of an organization's historical bias and

culture it may be more adaptive and prone to innovation. Posen's and Rosen's theories lacked this variable. However, because this variable is constant through out the case studies, no conclusions as to its necessity or sufficiency can be drawn.

Second, there was a shift in the strategic environment in all three cases. This shift created unmet military challenges, a requirement, or need for which SOF could be used. Avant's theory lacked this variable, but this conclusion adds credibility to Posen's and Rosen's theories that military innovation is preceded by changes in the security environment. While it can be speculated that without a shift in the security environment, U. S. SOF would not have developed these capabilities, again, because of a lack of variance and a limited number of case studies, this conclusion is tentative. To fully determine the necessity of this variable as a precedent to innovation, a broad set of case studies would have to be examined for any occurrences of an innovation in the absence of an environmental shift.

Third, civilian intervention was present in the case studies of counterinsurgency and counterproliferation but not present in the second case of counterterrorism. Because innovation occurs in the counterterrorism case in the

absence of civilian intervention, this intervention is not necessary for innovation to occur. This contradicts what Posen would predict, that military organizations are not prone to innovation in the absence of civilian intervention. This conclusion is congruent with the theories of Rosen and Avant.

Fourth, SOF leadership is necessary for innovation. When no powerful SOF senior military leader existed, as in the counterinsurgency case, innovation in SOF did not happen. Rosen's theory would predict this outcome.

Additionally, the cases point to two other findings, the importance of resources and promotion paths in order to institutionalize innovation. In the counterinsurgency case, there were military leaders who where advocates of SOF developing counterinsurgency capabilities, but these leaders had limited control of SOF resources and could not provide promotion opportunities for junior officers. In this case, innovation was not institutionalized. Innovation was successful in the counterterrorism case, where resources and promotion opportunities were ensured by support within the Army and the Army Chief of Staff, and in the counterproliferation case, where resources were provided by generating civilian support. These findings are summarized below in Table II.

	Historical Biases and Culture	Strategic Environment	Civilian Intervention	Senior Military Leaders (resources, Promotion Paths)	Innovation
Counter-insurgency	Present	Present	Present	Not Present	No
Combating Terrorism	Present	Present	Not Present	Present	Yes
Counter-proliferation	Present	Present	Present	Present	Yes

Table II. Summary of Case Study Findings

B. RECOMMENDATIONS

These six findings suggest six possible recommendations for United States Special Operations Command (USSOCOM):

- U. S. SOF culture was important to the development of these innovations. Early on in its history, SOF needed to search for new missions for their organizational survival. Consequently, SOF developed a flexible, externally focused culture. In the future, as U. S. SOF becomes more accepted within the Department of Defense and its missions established, this culture may gradually change. SOF leaders must continue to foster an organizational culture that encourages flexibility and debate on future missions.
- The findings suggest that the first step for innovation is being aware that there is a shift in the strategic environment, that the need for innovation exists, and that SOF can provide new capabilities to meet this need. Therefore, U. S. SOF must remain involved and engaged around the world in order to be aware of possible emerging threats. They should actively question SOF's role in the strategic environment, speculate as to its nature, and test possible innovative ways in which SOF can be employed.

- While civilians may not be necessary or sufficient for innovation, they can provide support and resources. This support was instrumental in the development of joint counterterrorism and counterproliferation capabilities. U. S. SOF should continue to conduct capability exercises and encourage civilian involvement in developing SOF missions.
- Innovation ultimately derives from leadership efforts within SOF. U. S. SOF must have senior officers with traditional credentials, experience in the conventional military and special operations. They must be willing to examine new ways of doing things and be provided with the resources to do so.
- Resources are important for innovation. U. S. SOF have continued to add new missions and have not given up any old ones, this may cause a competition for scarce resources. Additional resources to develop innovations may not be available, or senior leaders within SOF may not be willing to commit resources to innovations at the expense of conducting traditional missions. SOF should continuously reevaluate its missions to determine if new ones should be added and traditional ones dropped.

- Control over promotion pathways is important for innovation. While special operations officers compete in their respective services for promotion, USSOCOM must be able to ensure that officers with experience in new missions are competitive and have adequate opportunities to advance.

As was true in the past, SOF's strength in the future will lie in their versatility and ability to innovate.

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